



# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

AND

Medical Officer for Maternity  
and Child Welfare

OF THE

Borough of Taunton

For the Year 1920

BY

JOHN ALLEN, M.B., Ch.B. D.P.H.



# Health Department Staff.

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*Medical Officer of Health :*

*School Medical Officer :*

*Medical Officer for Maternity and Child Welfare :*

*Hon. Medical Officer Taunton Day Nursery :*

JOHN ALLEN, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

*Consulting Medical Officer :*

HENRY J. ALFORD, M.D., F.I.C.

*Sanitary Inspector :*

J. W. NORTHCOMBE, C.R.S.I., F.I.S.E., M.S.I.A.

*Assistant Sanitary Inspector :*

F. M. WESTCOTT.

*Health Visitor :*

Mrs. E. STEWART, C.M.B.

*Clerk :*


HERBERT TUXWORTH.

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TAUNTON :

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# Medical Officer's Report.

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*To The Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough  
of Taunton.*

MR. MAYOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary Conditions of the Borough for the year 1920. This Report summarizes the work of my first complete year, and is drawn up in accordance with Memorandum 40 Int. of the Ministry of Health, and there is in consequence some unavoidable repetition of matter. Special attention was given to the conditions under which food of various kinds was manufactured or produced and I regret to have to report that these are far from satisfactory: there are however no legal powers to compel the adoption of more wholesome conditions. These conditions are not peculiar to Taunton, but exist in all areas. The Births, Deaths, and Infant Mortality Rates all show improvement.

The small outbreak of Enteric Fever in the beginning of the year was fortunately dealt with before it had been able to assume larger proportions, full particulars are given on page 18, et seq.

As the Board of Education have required their statistics regarding the inspection and treatment of elementary school children at an earlier date and as the details required by the Ministry of Health were not available till February, 1921, it has been found necessary to issue the Public Health and School Medical Reports separately.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN ALLEN.

20th April, 1921.

## SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1920.

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Population at Census 1911	...	...	...	...	22,563
Population estimated to middle of year 1920	...				24,031
Population for Birth rate	...	...	...	...	21,693
Population for Death rate	...	...	...	...	21,451
Area of Borough in Statute acres	...	...	...	...	1,390
Density of population over whole area	...	...			17.2
Density of population in area built on (1,051 acres)	...				22.8
Births registered	...	...	...	...	502
Birth rate	...	...	...	...	23.1
Birth rate (illegitimate)	...	...	...	...	1.3
Deaths registered after correction for inward and outward transfers	...	...	...	...	266
Net Death rate (corrected)	...	...	...	...	12.4
Infant Mortality per 1000 births	...	...	...	...	50
Cancer Death Rate	...	...	...	...	0.7
Tuberculosis Death Rate (including Phthisis)	...				1.8
Zymotic Disease Death Rate	...	...	...	...	0.1
Influenza Death Rate	...	...	...	...	0.2

### England and Wales for the year 1920:

Birth Rate	...	...	...	...	25.4
Death Rate	...	...	...	...	12.4

## NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT.

Details of the physical features and general character of the district were given in the Annual Report for 1919.

The social conditions were also described.

The death rate figure (12.4) was the same as in 1919, but the birth rate (23.1) was almost double that of the previous year.

The total rainfall for the year was less than that of 1919, but the number of hours of sunshine was also less.

The causes of death at the respective ages are given on page 6, these call for no special comment.

This table does not agree with that for infectious diseases on page 23 as it includes only the deaths of residents, while that for infectious diseases includes all deaths whether resident or non-resident.

Poor Law Relief. The amount distributed is not included as it is not possible to separate from this the proportion due to the Borough.

CAUSES OF DEATH.  
Corrected List from the Registrar General.

Causes of Death, Civilians only.					Males.		Females.
ALL CAUSES .. .. .					123	..	143
1.	Enteric Fever	..	..	..	—	..	—
2.	Small Pox	..	..	..	—	..	—
3.	Measles	..	..	..	—	..	—
4.	Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	—	..	—
5.	Whooping Cough	..	..	..	—	..	—
6.	Diphtheria and Croup	..	..	..	2	..	—
7.	Influenza	..	..	..	4	..	2
8.	Erysipelas	..	..	..	—	..	—
9.	Pulmonary Tuberculosis	..	..	..	7	..	19
10.	Tuberculous Meningitis	..	..	..	1	..	—
11.	Other Tuberculous Diseases	..	..	..	8	..	6
12.	Cancer, Malignant Disease	..	..	..	10	..	6
13.	Rheumatic Fever	..	..	..	2	..	—
14.	Meningitis	..	..	..	—	..	1
15.	Organic Heart Disease	..	..	..	10	..	25
16.	Bronchitis	..	..	..	11	..	10
17.	Pneumonia (all forms)	..	..	..	6	..	4
18.	Other respiratory Diseases	..	..	..	3	..	2
19.	Diarrhœa, &c. (under 2 years)	..	..	..	2	..	—
20.	Appendicitis & Typhlitis	..	..	..	—	..	3
21.	Cirrhosis of Liver	..	..	..	2	..	—
21A.	Alcoholism	..	..	..	2	..	—
22.	Nephritis and Bright's Disease	..	..	..	3	..	2
23.	Puerperal Fever	..	..	..	—	..	1
24.	Parturition, apart from Puerperal Fever	..	..	..	—	..	1
25.	Congenital Debility, &c.	..	..	..	7	..	2
26.	Violence, apart from Suicide	..	..	..	7	..	7
27.	Suicide	..	..	..	—	..	2
28.	Other defined Diseases	..	..	..	35	..	50
29.	Causes ill-defined or unknown	..	..	..	1	..	—
Special Causes (included above)							
	Cerebro-spinal Fever	..	..	..	—	..	—
	Poliomyelitis	..	..	..	—	..	—
Deaths of infants under 1 year of age					15	..	10
Total Illegitimate					1	..	1
TOTAL BIRTHS					246	..	256
Legitimate					235	..	238
Illegitimate					11	..	18
POPULATION—For Birth Rate					21693		
For Death Rate					21451		

## SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

### Water Supply.

The town and part of the adjacent rural area have a continuous supply of water from the Taunton Corporation Waterworks. These are situated on the Blackdown Hills. There are 3 reservoirs with a total storage capacity of 160 million gallons and a filtration plant. A sample of this water was submitted to an independent analyst during the year who reported that "it was quite satisfactory." There are known to be several wells in use in the town and doubtless there are others which are not known. As these are discovered samples are taken for analysis.

Samples were taken from eleven wells during the year; of these 3 were reported to be satisfactory; two were not satisfactory, and 6 showed marked evidence of pollution. Of these six—4 were in use in dairies, while the other two were in use in inn yards, as were also the two unsatisfactory ones. The four in use in the dairies were immediately closed; those in use in the Inns were used only for swilling down yards, etc., and their use was confined to this purpose. Of the three reported clean, one was in use at a Dairy, one in a dwellinghouse, and one in a general store.

### Rivers and Streams.

The River Tone flows through the town and also receives several small streams in its passage through the town. Samples have been taken of the river water during the year, both at French Weir and at Bathpool. These were reported as satisfactory.

### Drainage and Sewerage.

Samples were taken of the crude sewage and the effluent on several occasions, but the reports on these could not give a correct estimate of the character of the sewage and effluent as the samples were all taken at one period and not at equal intervals during a period of 24 hours. The earlier series of reports stated that the effluent was not satisfactory while a sample taken later in the year showed considerable improvement. There are known to be nine cesspits in the area—six of these have no overflow while three have overflows—two discharging into ditches and one into a field.

These cesspools are situated—5 in the Obridge district, 1 at Ashmeadow, 1 at Musgrove and 2 at Sherford. It is not possible in any of these cases to compel connection with a sewer. They are all regularly inspected and emptied. Those at Obridge are below the level of the sewer while the remainder are over 100ft. distant from the nearest sewer.

### **Closet accommodation.**

There are no privies in the town. The number of water closets is approximately 5,824. Where these water closets are situate in the courts frequent inspection is necessary, both to ensure that they are kept in a cleanly condition and that they are not choked by using them as a means of disposal for refuse of all kinds. Many of the tenants will not realise that it is their duty to keep these in a cleanly condition. Disinfectant fluids or powders are quite unnecessary for this purpose; nor are they supplied by the Health Department for this object. In the courts an endeavour is being made to ensure that there is at least 1 w.c. for every 10 persons.

### **Scavenging.**

The general method of storing household refuse prior to its removal by the scavengers is to keep it in any old bucket or box, almost invariably without any cover. This receptacle is generally kept in the open and so in rainy weather the weight of the contents increases considerably. This method renders its disposal much more costly, both in carriage and destruction. There are 39 dry ashpits in the town. It does not appear possible to compel the landlord or tenant to provide and maintain proper covered metal receptacles for this purpose in existing houses.

The amount of refuse removed per year is approximately 8,000 tons. Plans have been prepared for the reconstruction of the refuse destructor, and the estimates await sanction.

Two electric vehicles are now in use for removing refuse in addition to the ordinary carts. The collected refuse is all taken to the destructor at the sewerage works for incineration.

**Sanitary Inspection of the District.** See pages 43 et seq.

## Premises and Occupations which can be controlled by Bye-laws or Regulations.

There are in the district :

Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	23
Dairies and Milk Shops, and Cowsheds	...				42
Slaughterhouses registered	...	...	...		7
„ licensed	...	...	...		2
Gut scraping premises	...	...	...		1
Tripe Boiling premises	...	...	...		8
Common Lodging Houses	...	...	...		2
Tannery	...	...	...		1

The question of adopting the new Model Bye-Laws for Slaughterhouses (Ministry of Health 1920) was under consideration at the end of the year. The advisability of adopting the Model Bye-Laws for Houses let in lodgings and for tents, vans, sheds, and similar structures was also under consideration. These would ensure a more sanitary condition of certain houses let in lodgings and prevent the nuisance which has arisen and caused frequent complaints in respect of lack of urinal and closet accommodation on the grounds occupied by fairs and travelling shows.

It also appears most necessary to include the trades of Fish Frier and Dealer in Rags and Bones in the list of offensive trades—also if possible that of dealers in Hides and Skins.

### Other Sanitary Conditions requiring Notice.

No power exists to prevent any person suffering from Tuberculosis (in any active form) from dealing in milk or any other food. Numerous cases of this have been brought to my notice but I have no power to prevent such persons selling milk regrettable and liable to spread infection as it may be.

### Schools.

All the schools are supplied with town water. One or two of these have the drinking water supplied by a vertical jet which is more satisfactory and cleanly than the cup. The w.c.'s and urinals of all the schools were inspected during the year. In some cases the caretakers have allowed a deposit of urates to form by not cleansing the urinals.

In one school the surface of the ground in a boys urinal sloped away from the trough and gave rise to a nuisance. This was remedied.

**Infectious Diseases.**

On receipt of a notification from a medical practitioner the Sanitary Inspector visits the house; he takes note of any defects and inquires into the history of the case; he also takes a complete list of all the inmates of the house and their occupations. From this record a notice is sent to the Head Teacher of any school from which there are children in the house requiring the immediate exclusion of these children from school and their continued exclusion until certified as fit to return.

These certificates are given only after personal examination of each child after the lapse of the proper incubation period.

A notice sent to the Free Library also prevents any books being drawn until the house is cleared.

The Medical Officer of Health is also the School Medical Officer; the School Report being printed under a separate cover.

**Sanitary Condition of Theatres, Music Halls, etc.**

These were inspected with the Surveyor.

There are 4 in the town— one giving a variety performance only, one giving either theatrical or cinema shows, and two giving cinema shows only.

The condition of the accommodation for the artistes was examined and one was subsequently redecorated.

One has insufficient w.c. provision.

The ventilation in all of these leaves much to be desired, while the spraying of the audience by peculiarly perfumed solutions is useless and annoying.

**FOOD.****(a) Milk Supply.**

No grade A or certified milk is obtainable in this area.

There are 45 dealers in milk registered under the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshop Regs. Of these the premises of 38 are within the Borough while 7 are without. There are 7 premises where cows are kept and 31 where milk is retailed. Two of these premises are milk depots. I have personally inspected all these during the year.

(i) **Cowsheds.** None of these are of a modern type. The cows are however out on grass land for the greater part of the year from all these. They are all well ventilated—the fronts being open, but much more care should be given to their cleanliness. In one case the byres and central yard were in such a filthy condition that the occupier was served with an informal notice to clean them as a common nuisance. This order was immediately complied with. In all these the milkers pails are of the open top type, so that dried dung may fall from the cows udders or flanks directly into the milk. A cooler was in use in one only. It is most important that the milk be cooled as soon as possible after withdrawal from the cow to prevent the multiplication of the bacteria in the milk, but besides the reluctance of the milk producer to use these there is also an unfortunate prejudice among consumers against cold milk. I have frequently seen milk being taken through the town in churns where a piece of unclean cloth is inserted between the lid and the churn to prevent splashing. None of these producers have a steam jet for cleansing the churns; the usual method being to cleanse them with heated water from a boiler. Well water was used in 4 of these (samples were taken and 3 were found to be contaminated); these were closed and town's water is now in use. No pasteurizers were in use.

(ii) **Depots.** There are two milk depots; milk being received from the producers and sent to other dealers. Pasteurizers and coolers were in use in both. These pasteurizers were of the flash (or continuous flow) type, so the passage of the milk through these is not likely to seriously diminish the immense number of bacteria present. Steam jets are used in these depots for cleansing the churns.

Both were using well water—samples of these were taken and both showed signs of pollution. One is now using town water and in the other steps are being taken to provide town water.

(iii) **Retailers.** There are 30 premises from which milk is

retailed in the town. In 14 of these the sale of milk and its products are a "side line." The milk in these premises is generally all kept in the shop, either on or under the counter or on shelves at the side. It is unusual to find the milk pans covered—so the milk is liable to pollution from any person coughing or sneezing, or by dust from the street.

I know of 3 where the milk is kept in a cool clean room apart from the shop and other foods. One retailer uses a cooler—none have pasteurizers or steam jets for cleansing the vessels.

One retailer's premises was also an inn; the milk being dealt with in a cellar. This retailer has now given up the milk business. In another the premises were in an uncleanly condition and the occupier was required to abate this as a common nuisance. This retailer requires constant supervision to ensure that the premises are maintained in even a passable condition of cleanliness. If any milk remains unsold at night it is generally scalded, and the scald cream and scald milk separated and sold on the following day. It does not appear to be necessary to label the vessels containing the scald milk as such, hence it is possible for a customer to be served from the wrong container.

I am of the opinion that the powers given under the present Regulations for D.C. and M. are not sufficient to ensure that the milk sold is fit for human consumption.

Copies of the Regulations for D.C. and M. were sent in the year to every person registered, while publicity was given in the "Somerset County Gazette" on the 22.v.20 regarding the necessity for registration of all persons to whom these regulations applied. One retailer was afterwards found delivering milk while not registered, this retailer, however, registered immediately and no action was taken.

No action has been taken as to Tuberculous Milk.

An outbreak of Typhoid Fever at the end of 1919 and beginning of 1920, was discovered to be caused by milk, imported from a dairy in the Taunton Rural Area. Action was taken under Sec. 4 Infectious Diseases (Prevention) Act, 1890 and the supply stopped. This caused the cessation of the outbreak. An action for damages was subsequently brought by the farmer, this was tried and dismissed. Fuller details are given on page 18.

**Milk (Mothers and Children) Order, 1919.** This was in force in the area. The milk was given to necessitous cases only. Details of the administration will be found under Maternity and Child Welfare on page 28.

(b) **Meat.**

(i) The inspection of meat is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector and his Assistant, these officers pay frequent visits to all the slaughter houses and to the market in which latter place meat is sold in increasing quantities. They have paid 184 visits to the 9 slaughterhouses. The total amount of meat (and offals) condemned during the year weighed 1 ton, 15 cwt. 3 qrs. 19 lbs. It is, however, not possible for these officers to see every beast after slaughter.

**Condition of Slaughterhouses.**

Licensed. One of these is within 40-ft. of a dwelling house, while the other is over 100-ft. distant from the nearest dwelling-house. In both there are impervious coatings to inside walls; brick floors, and a proper supply of water for cleansing. In one, animals awaiting slaughter can see others being killed and dressed, and in one there is no proper receptacle for waste matter.

Registered. Three out of the 7 of these are actually abutting on dwelling-houses, while the remainder are all within 100 ft. of the nearest dwelling-house.

All have an open approach, an ample supply of water for cleansing purposes, and through ventilation. The inner walls of 4 are brick, limewashed, and of three brick and cement. There are gulleys within the slaughterhouse in 6 of the 7. Animals awaiting slaughter are kept out of sight of the slaughtering in 6 out of the 7. None of the 7 have proper metal receptacles for the waste matter. The mechanically operated (or humane killer) is stated to be invariably used in 2 and occasionally in three of all the slaughterhouses.

(ii) There is no public abattoir in the area. There are no special arrangements for inspecting meat at the time of slaughter. The butchers kill at irregular times; the Sanitary Inspector visiting the slaughterhouses as frequently as possible. 184 visits were made by him for this purpose during the year.

(iii) No action has been taken under Sec. 117 P.H. Act, 1875.

(iv) The number of carcasses and parts of carcasses condemned for Tuberculosis was 4. 2 being pigs 1 a cow and 1 a ram.

(v) Number of Slaughterhouses in use in the district at dates mentioned:

	In 1914.	In January 1920.	In December, 1920.
Registered	8	7	7
Licensed	2	2	2
	—	—	—
Total	10	9	9
	—	—	—

Application was made during the year to re-open an old registered Slaughterhouse, this had not been in use for over 7 years and the registration had lapsed. As this building was surrounded by dwelling-houses and several were within 100-ft. of it, permission was withheld.

(c) **Other Foods.**

Some attention has been given during the year to the preparation of sausages. The conditions under which these were being made were generally most unwholesome and unsatisfactory.

In one case a butcher was seen compounding the sausage "meat" in the Slaughterhouse on a filthy block; the slaughterhouse had also not been cleaned up after slaughtering. In another the sausages were being manufactured in a loft over a stable the internal walls and roof of which were dirty; while the floor was littered with hay and dung. In another case the sausages were being made in an outhouse adjacent to a Slaughterhouse; in this outhouse there was a gulley into which the Slaughterhouse drained and an unventilated w.c. in a dirty condition also opened into it; the general condition of the outhouse was dirty. It is astonishing to me that there are not frequent outbreaks of food poisoning when sausages are manufactured under such conditions. I have made extensive enquiries and cannot find that I have any power to require the remedying of these disgusting and unwholesome conditions. In one case the butcher when the unsatisfactory conditions of the premises were pointed out has completely altered them and they are now of a more satisfactory nature.

It is a far from general practice to clean the sausage making machine after use.

Food inspection is of little avail until more drastic powers for its regulation are made.

The Bakehouses are well-kept and clean; none are underground.

### **Ice Cream.**

Some premises where this compound was manufactured were inspected. It should be understood that it does not contain any cream as a rule, the substance being usually made from a flavoured powder and skim milk. The composition is first heated and then cooled, first by water and then by a freezing mixture. The heating may destroy any bacteria present in the milk, but the composition when cooling is liable to contamination if cooled in insanitary places. In one place it was put to cool in a dirty outhouse communicating with an even more dirty fowl run; in another it was put to cool in a small covered yard where all the waste food and garbage from a restaurant were deposited. I have no power to require any less unsatisfactory methods.

### **(d) Food Poisoning.**

A small number of boys in a residential school were suddenly taken ill with vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhoea, and collapse in March.

Enquiries were made as to the foods eaten, no special food could be found that while eaten by these boys had not been eaten by the other boys in the school, the milk (which was not boiled) was also supplied to another large institution (where it was also not boiled) and no similar cases had arisen in the latter.

The foods which appeared most likely to have been the possible cause were sausages, beef, veal (tinned), and cheese. Samples of these were sent to the County Bacteriologist; no bacilli of the Gaertner type were found. Repeated samples of blood from 10 of the affected boys were also tested by the Bacteriologist for agglutination to bacilli of the Gaertner type without success. In all 23 boys were taken ill during 14 days, then no further cases developed.

On examining the conditions under which the sausages were made these were found to be most unsatisfactory, and it was also found that some of the same batch of sausages had been eaten by the boys in another residential school; where some of the boys had similar symptoms. Blood from these was also tested without showing any agglutination to Bacilli of the Gaertner type. I have no doubt that these boys were suffering from food poisoning but have no proof of this; although the sausages appeared suspect.

(e) The Council are not an Authority for the purpose of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act.

In a case which came to my knowledge it was found that a butcher when asked for calves liver supplied one third of the weight in melt (or spleen). This was clearly an offence under this Act, no prosecution resulted.

One milk vendor in the Borough was prosecuted by the Police for selling milk deficient in fat to the extent of 20 per cent. The prosecution failed, the vendor stating that the sample which was taken out of open pan late in the day was poor because she had omitted to stir the milk each time she served a customer.

## PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

A table on page 23 is given showing the total notifications the age distribution, and deaths.

The Infectious Diseases notifiable in this area are as follows :

- Smallpox.
- Cholera.
- Diphtheria and Membranous Croup.
- Erysipelas.
- Scarlet Fever and Scarlatina.
- Typhus Fever.
- Typhoid Fever (including Enteric and Paratyphoid Fevers)
- Relapsing Fevers.
- Continued Fever.
- Puerperal Fever.
- Cerebro-spinal Fever.
- Acute Poliomyelitis.
- Ophthalmia Neonatorum.
- Measles.
- German Measles.
- Tuberculosis (all forms).
- Malaria.
- Dysentery (Amoebic and Bacillary)
- Trench Fever.
- Acute Primary Pneumonia.
- Acute Influenzal Pneumonia.
- Encephalitis Lethargica.
- Acute Polio Encephalitis.

### Enteric Fever.

Five cases were notified to me between 9th November and 31st December, 1919. One of these was a non-resident and had not contracted the disease in this area, but in a rural district. Three of the remaining four cases had all their milk from one retailer while the fourth was supplied by 2 retailers, one being the same retailer who supplied the other three cases. This retailer's premises and staff were examined and there did not appear to be any likelihood of the milk being infected there. This retailer obtained his milk from three sources, two being farmers whose whole supply was taken, the third was from a milk depot supplying other retailers in the town. As no cases of Enteric could be traced to the other retailers, the infection appeared to

lie between the two farmers; the premises of both of these were outside my area.

I subsequently found that a case of Enteric Fever had been sent into the Isolation Hospital from a cottage adjacent to one of these farms, and that the well water used by this cottage and the milkman was the same. Samples of this well water and of a milk in the dairy were taken. These facts were reported to a special meeting of the Health Committee and it was decided to take action under Infectious Diseases (Prevention) Act, 1890, Sec. 4. The farmer appeared before the Health Committee on 5th Jan., 1921, to show cause why an order should not be made prohibiting the entry of his milk within the Borough. No cause was shown and it was decided to make the order which was served on the farmer on 5th Jan., 1921. The last entry of milk from this dairy into my area was on the 6th Jan., 1921.

The sample of milk taken was reported as most unsatisfactory; the well water was also reported as contaminated. As the incubation period of Enteric Fever may extend to 21 days after infection this action would be still further justified if no further cases of Enteric Fever could be traced where the illness commenced after 27th January.

The cases notified were as follows :

Case.	Date of Notification.	Date of commencement of illness
G.S.	11th Jan. 1920	7th Dec. 1919
I.H.	18th „ „	4th Jan. 1920
F.H.	„ „ „	9th „ „
Mrs. B.	„ „ „	4th „ „
Mrs. S.	23rd „ „	15th „ „
R.P.	„ „ „	18th „ „
S.H.	„ „ „	15th „ „
F.E.D.	3rd Feb. „	14th „ „
Mrs. T.	13th „ „	28th „ „
B.R.P.G.	12th Mar. „	27th Feb. „
B.H.	15th „ „	4th Mar. „
Mrs. P.	4th June „	28th May „

It will be seen that 4 cases were notified where the illness commenced after the 27th January, 1920. Of these Mrs. T. was found to have nursed her son who was ill the preceding Christmas this boy was found to have good agglutination to Typhoid Bacilli and it was then found that he had had an unrecognised attack of Enteric, the mother having contracted the disease by sleeping with him. B.R.P.G. was a boarder at a school outside my area, and she had contracted the disease there. B.H. had nursed I.H. and contracted the disease from her. Mrs. P. was subsequently

proved not to have Enteric Fever. No further cases were notified. It therefore appears that the action in stopping the entry of this milk within the Borough was successful in preventing an outbreak. In all at least 15 cases were caused by this milk. There were no deaths. Agglutination tests were made for 12 of them and the re-action indicated infection by Bac. Typhosus and not to Bacilli of the Paratyphoid type.

The dairyman subsequently sued the Corporation for £100 as damages for the injury and loss which he alleged was caused by negligence of the Corporation.

The action was tried by His Honour Judge Lindley on 25th June and 3rd July, in the County Court, Taunton, when the action of the farmer failed and was dismissed with costs for the Corporation.

Some cases of Paratyphoid Fever occurred in March in a residential school just outside the Borough. This school obtained all its milk from a dairy within the Borough. I visited this dairy and took blood for tests from all the staff; also water from a well used there. The blood tests were negative to Typhoid and Paratyphoid in all the staff except one, this man, an ex-service man, had had many anti-typhoid inoculations, so this result was of no significance, but to make quite sure, samples of his excreta were taken, no Typhoid or Paratyphoid Bacilli were found, so he was allowed to return to work.

A list of the dairy customers was obtained, and an enquiry among 80 per cent. of these failed to trace any illness resembling Typhoid. The milk did not therefore appear to me to be the cause of the outbreak in this case. The well water was contaminated, so the well was closed.

### Diphtheria.

It will be noticed that the cases of this are classed as clinical (that is actually suffering) and bacteriological (that having the Dip. Bac. present but not actually ill). It is my practice after the removal of a case to hospital and disinfection of the premises to swab the throats or nose or any other lesions of all the inhabitants of the same house to ensure that they do not harbour the bacillus. In one family where a child had died in 1914 from Diphtheria, another child was notified in July, 1920, and died the same day, another child was taken ill with Diphtheria 2 days after, and removed to the Isolation Hospital, while 2 other children were taken ill in August, it was then found that the mother was a carrier and had the Diphtheria Bacillus in her throat, although no history of illness could be traced. On her admission to the Iso-

lation Hospital she was found to have a sore head and the Diphtheria Bacillus was also found to be present in the sores there.

In September some further cases appeared to be connected with an elementary school, all the children in the suspected classes were examined and all with running noses or discharging ears swabbed as well as those who had been absent or were absent with illness of a suspicious nature and no doctor in attendance. The School Nurses were of the greatest use and reported to me daily, by these means 4 children were found ill at home suffering from clinical Diphtheria with no doctor attending, while 3 children actually attending this school were found to have the Diphtheria Bacillus present; two in the throat and one in the ear. On examining the contacts at home, bacteriological cases or carriers were found in 8 of the families implicated. In 5 of these there was one case in each, while in the other two families 3 carriers were found in each family. All these carrier cases were removed to the Isolation Hospital. A boy in a residential boys home was notified as suffering from Diphtheria on 17th Nov., and removed to the Isolation Hospital; there were 14 boys and 3 adults resident, these were all swabbed when three boys were found to be carriers these were removed and the contacts again swabbed when two boys were reported carriers—these were removed and these contacts again swabbed—when one boy was reported a carrier—he was removed and the process repeated when a further boy was reported a carrier, this case was also removed and the contacts swabbed again, when all the contacts were found clear. In all the contacts were swabbed on five successive occasions before the home was cleared. One of the first 3 boys removed had recently come to the home from another area where he had a transient illness which may possibly have been a mild unrecognised attack of Diphtheria.

A child attending an elementary school but living in the Taunton Rural Area was sent to the school clinic for Impetigo when there he fainted and was found to have a purulent nasal discharge; a swab was taken from this and the boy was found to be suffering from Nasal Diphtheria.

I hope that it may be possible by the careful investigation of all contacts to reduce the incidence of Diphtheria in this area.

Of the two cases dying from Diphtheria both came very late under medical treatment being practically moribund before the doctor was called in. A supply of Diphtheria Anti-Toxin is now kept both at the Health Offices and the residence of the Medical Officer of Health so as to be available at any time.

**Scarlet Fever.**

Three of the cases were notified in the spring while seven were notified in the autumn, one of the latter was an imported case and died in the Isolation Hospital.

**Encephalitis Lethargica.**

One case was notified in February, the other in April, the first was a girl age 13 working in a collar factory. She had no eye symptoms, the chief symptoms being drowsiness, headache and vomiting, she was treated in the Taunton and Somerset Hospital and discharged cured on 17th April, 1920. She has returned to her work and is now well. The second was a female age 32, a teacher in a public elementary school, she also had no ocular symptoms; her condition being very similar to the first case. She was treated in the Taunton and Somerset Hospital and returned to work on 18th June, 1920. There was no connection between the 2 cases but the homes were about 100 yards apart.

**Dysentery.**

These were all ex-service men who contracted the disease abroad. They are not engaged in the manufacture or preparation of any article used for food or drink.

**Malaria.**

These were all ex-service men—the disease being contracted abroad. I have no knowledge of any cases where the disease might have been contracted in the Borough.

**Ophthalmia Neonatorum.**

This disease of new born children is due to infection of the child's eyes during birth from the mother who is infected with the Gonococcus—it may cause total blindness.

Two cases were treated entirely at home, while 4 were treated in the Taunton and Somerset Hospital. One of these latter cases was from the Taunton rural area.

One child died, the true cause of death was however syphilis, this was an illegitimate child; the home conditions were extremely unsatisfactory; the mother at first refused to allow the child to be sent into hospital, when pressure was exerted she gave way, but too late to save the child. One case is still under treatment while the remainder have completely recovered with the eyes uninjured.

**Acute Pneumonia, Primary and Influenzal.**

Judging from the notifications the mortality of this disease is high, being 66% but I do not believe that all the cases have been notified. Five notifications were received after the patients were dead.

This is most unsatisfactory and the practitioners concerned were advised of this.

**Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis.**

The one notification received was of a child aged 15 months. He was treated in the Taunton and Somerset Hospital as an in-patient for 3 weeks.

**Measles and German Measles.**

These diseases are notifiable and an order confirming this was made by the Ministry of Health on 31st March, 1920. Cases among children are visited by either the Health Visitor or School Nurse according to the age. All children from the same house are excluded from school until 14 days after the onset of the illness of the last case. If necessary I have also visited the homes—either to verify the diagnosis or inspect the home conditions where no medical practitioner was in attendance. When a medical practitioner was in attendance a nurse from the Taunton District Nursing Association would attend if required by him without this assistance being charged to the Corporation.

It was not found necessary to remove any of the cases to the Isolation Hospital.

Nursing was supplied to two cases—fifteen visits were made.

NOTIFICATIONS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	SEX		Total of all Ages	AGE GROUPS OF CASES NOTIFIED.								Removed to Hospital	Deaths
	M.	F.		Under 1 year	1 to 2 years	2 to 5 years	5 to 15 years	15 to 25 years	25 to 45 years	45 to 65 years	65 years and over		
Diphtheria—													
Clinical ..	12	13	25	1	..	2	16	3	3	..	..	23	2
Bacteriological ..	11	10	21	..	..	..	15	2	1	3	..	21	..
Dysentery ..	3	..	3	..	..	..	..	1	1	1	..	1	..
Encephalitis Lethargica ..	..	2	2	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	2	..
Enteric Fever ..	2	10	12	..	..	1	5	3	3	..	..	3	..
Erysipelas ..	7	6	13	..	..	..	2	..	1	7	3	4	..
German Measles ..	6	3	9	..	..	..	3	3	3	..	..	..	..
Measles ..	43	35	78	1	..	18	53	3	3	..	..	..	..
Malaria ..	5	..	5	..	..	..	..	3	2	..	..	..	..
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ..	2	4	6	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	1
Pneumonia—													
Acute Primary ..	7	1	8	..	..	..	2	3	3	..	..	1	5
Influenzal ..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Poliomyelitis, Acute Antr. ..	1	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Scarlet Fever ..	5	5	10	..	1	1	5	2	1	..	..	8	1
Puerperal Fever ..	..	2	2	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..
Tuberculosis—													
Pulmonary ..	38	59	97	..	..	..	40	16	29	12	..	..	..
Non Pulmonary ..	24	16	40	1	1	5	9	11	7	5	1	..	.

**Public Health (Small Pox Prevention) Regulations, 1917.**

Four persons were notified to me by other authorities as having been in contact with cases of Small Pox, and entered this area. Two of these could not be traced owing to incorrect addresses. The other two were vaccinated by me—the vaccinations were successful—these contacts were kept under daily observation for 18 days from the date of last contact—no symptoms of Small Pox appeared.

One was a primary, the other a secondary vaccination.

There are no facilities in this area for the cleansing of verminous persons.

**Tuberculosis.**

Two cases of Tuberculosis were notified on the day of death while in another death no notification could be traced.

Disinfection of the rooms occupied by cases of tuberculosis is now carried out in a more thorough manner after removal or death of the case.

Washable articles are soaked in a solution of Izal, blankets, mattresses, etc., are taken to the disinfector, and there subjected to steam at low pressure for three intervals of 5 minutes each. The walls and floor are sprayed with a 2% solution of Izal.

The Taunton Tuberculosis Care Committee provides necessitous patients who are likely to benefit with extra nourishment and clothing and gives most valuable help in dealing with cases.

**Venereal Diseases.**

It cannot be too widely known that free treatment is provided for all persons suffering from either Gonorrhoea, Syphilis, or Soft Chancre, or who believe they may be so suffering. This is provided by the Somerset County Council; the treatment centre being at the Taunton and Somerset Hospital. Women attend at 2.30 p.m. on Tuesday afternoons, and men at 4 p.m. on Saturday afternoons.

Small posters containing this information have been posted in all the public lavatories and in many of those in hotels, etc., during the year.

No facilities for early disinfection are available.

## MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

The arrangements for attending to the health of expectant or nursing mothers and children under five years of age are under the care of the Maternity and Child Welfare Committee, which consists of the Health Committee (9 members); one representative of the Medical Profession; 3 representatives from the Taunton Infant Health Society, and 2 representatives from the Working Women's Organizations. The staff consists of the Medical Officer and the Health Visitor.

The Medical Officer holds consultations weekly at the Centre and is responsible for the administration and supervision of the work. The Health Visitor visits all births notified after the midwife has ceased to attend. She advises the mother on the care of herself and the infant, its food and general management. She pays about 4 visits during the first month and 8 during the first year; 2 to 4 visits during the second year and two to three visits during the third year. She records the visits on a Birth Card and notes the progress of the child. Where required she advises the mother to attend the Infant Consultations and to visit the Centre.

### Maternity Homes or Hospitals.

There is no provision in the town and in a large area surrounding the town for uncomplicated cases of child birth except in the Workhouse Infirmary. The Taunton and Somerset Hospital does not admit such cases nor is there any other institution which will do so.

The Health Visitor has paid a total of 3,582 visits to homes during the year. These are First Visits—under 1 year, 374, ante-natal, 26, Re-visits—under 1 year, 1754, between 1 and 2 years, 717, between 2 and 3 years, 637, and ante-natal, 71.

### Births during 1920.

The total number of births registered was 502, giving a birth rate of 23.1 per thousand of the population; a large increase on the previous year.

Of these births, 246 were male and 256 female, while 29 were registered as illegitimate. I know of one registered as legitimate but really illegitimate, making the number of illegitimate born 30, giving an illegitimate birth rate of 1.3 per 1,000 of population.

The number of births notified to me under the Notification of Births Act 1907 was 529. Of these eleven were not notified until notice was sent to parent pointing out his delinquency. The number notified as stillborn was 22 giving a percentage of

4.1 still births to total births. This is high and represents a regrettable waste of future manhood. There were two cases of triplets, all of whom are living, and 7 cases of twins, born during the year.

The provisions of the Notification of Births Act were again published in the local press on the 6th November, 1920.

# Infant Deaths.

There were 25 deaths of children under 1 year of age during the year, giving an Infantile Death Rate of 50 per 1000 children born. This is half the rate for the previous year, but where the total number of births is so small it is not possible to draw any very definite deductions from these figures. It is at least much more satisfactory than in 1919. Two of these children were known to be illegitimate. One (D.C.) was found at home suffering from both Congenital Syphilis and Ophthalmia Neonatorum, the home conditions were exceedingly unsatisfactory, and after some persuasion the child was taken to the General Hospital and admitted as an In-Patient but too late to benefit.

The other (T) died of 'convulsions' at the age of 12 days. Of the two deaths from burns or scalds—one was due to the absence of any fire guard, and the other to the upsetting of a steam kettle, the child suffering from Bronchitis.

The death from Chicken Pox was specially investigated, but no traces of Small Pox could be found.

## THE CAUSES OF THE DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE.

DISEASE.	Under 1 week	1 to 2 weeks	2 to 3 weeks	3 to 4 weeks	Total under 1 month	1 to 3 months	3 to 6 months	6 to 9 months	9 to 12 months	Total under 1 year
Measles .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Influenza .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bronchitis .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Acute Pneumonia ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Broncho-Pneumonia ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Diarrhoea and Enteritis	..	1	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	2
Syphilis .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	3
Prematurity .. ..	..	5	..	1	6	..	..	..	..	6
Atrophy and Marasmus	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	1
Congenital Defects ..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	2
Accidents of Birth ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Scalds or Burns .. ..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	2
Tuberculosis .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	2
Icterus .. ..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	1
Chicken Pox .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Convulsions .. ..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	2
Rickets .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Total .. ..	6	2	2	1	11	6	..	3	5	25

Legitimate 23 }  
 Illegitimate 2 } 25

### The Infant Welfare Centre.

This meets once a week on Wednesday afternoons. It is divided into two parts, the purely voluntary portion where sewing classes, lectures, and meetings are held, meeting in the Municipal Hall (when it is not in use as a Police Court) while the Infant Consultations are held in the Technical Institute on the first floor. Both premises are very far from satisfactory, and the work is carried out under great difficulties. Infant Consultations were held on 50 afternoons during the year, at these the Health Visitor and 2 voluntary helpers are in attendance; babies are weighed and the results recorded on cards kept by the mothers. This mother then brings her child to the Medical Officer who records the weight on his record card and gives such advice as may be required.

The number of consultations given was 853, while 154 new cases attended.

The advice given may be classified as :—

Feeding and General Management	...	...	107
Disorders of Digestion	...	...	24
Rickets	...	...	10
Infantile Paralysis	...	...	4
Other Cases	...	...	37

Of these, 12 cases were referred to private practitioners and 14 to the Hospital, the latter being mostly cases of boys urgently in need of circumcision.

No ante-natal work is possible in the present buildings. There were 7 illegitimate children attending the consultations.

Chairs have now been provided for the mothers, and buckets are used as containers for the children's clothes while they are undressed for weighing. The Health Visitor superintends the medical side and two ladies of the Infant Health Society whose services are most valuable are responsible for the weighing. The Clerk is present also to fill in the consultation cards and income inquiry forms, when the mothers apply for milk at reduced rates. The orders for milk are issued from the Centre as far as possible.

### Milk (Mothers and Children) Order, 1919.

Briefly this Order empowers Local Authorities to supply milk at reduced prices to expectant or nursing mothers and to children under 5 years of age. This is only supplied to necessitous cases and the quantities which can be supplied are:

For children under 18 months,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pints daily.

For children between 18 months and under 5 years, 1 pint daily.

For Nursing or expectant mothers the quantity ordered is usually 2 pints daily.

In order that it may be limited to necessitous cases, the persons applying are required to complete an income statement including the names and ages of all members of the family, if at work, and where working, with the weekly wage, rent, and any other source of income. Milk was supplied free of cost to cases where the total income after deducting rent amounted to 7/- per head or less, and at half cost where the total income (less rent) amounted to less than 10/- per head. This limit per head was raised to 8/- for free orders and 12/- for half-price orders in December.

A large number of these statements were verified by inquiry of the employers.

The forms used for Free and Half-price Orders are as follows:

### FREE MILK ORDER.

Date.....

To Mr..... Please supply:—

Mrs..... of.....

with.....pint of milk per day free of cost for.....days

from.....and charge the whole to the Town Council.

.....

M.O.H.

To Milk Retailer.

This Order must be returned when forwarding account for payment, and payment will only be made to the retailer named.

Not Transferable.

**MILK ORDER.**

Date.....

To Mr..... Please supply :—

Mrs..... of.....

with.....pint of milk per day at half cost price for.....

days from..... to.....

and charge the other half to the Town Council.

.....

M.O.H.

To Milk Retailer.

This Order is not valid unless the full amount ordered is supplied.

This Order must be returned when forwarding account for payment.

—

These are numbered consecutively and written in duplicate with a carbon sheet. The carbon copy is given to the applicant for presentation to the milk retailer. The date of issue, number of order, and quantity given, are also entered on the income form signed by the applicant, so that a consecutive record is kept of the milk granted to every applicant.

These orders are usually made for a period not exceeding 28 days, when the person supplied has to apply again, and if the order is free to complete a fresh income form; while if it is half-cost a fresh income statement is required every 3 months. These orders are in general only issued at the Infant Consultations, and the child is required to be present and weighed unless illness or other such circumstances prevent this. When an application is made for an order at other times, the order (if given) is made for such a time that it expires on a Wednesday and the applicant then attends the Centre for a renewal. The orders are only made out to those milk vendors whose premises are satisfactory and preferably to those whose business is purely a dairy one. It was found that some mothers supplied with an order for milk at half-cost price were only taking half the quantity ordered, and thus obtaining it free; steps were taken to prevent a repeti-

tion of this. Another difficulty in regard to half-price orders was where the milk vendor allowed the purchaser to accumulate a debt; in several of such cases the retailer naturally refused to accept a further order until the debt was paid. In such circumstances the Order was not renewed to another retailer. I believe that the provision of milk under these conditions has been of the greatest benefit to the children and may have been one of the causes of the marked reduction of the Infant Death Rate. The issue control and investigation of these orders have greatly increased the work of the department but it would require the services of another clerk to investigate all the income statements. The bills from milk retailers for milk sold on these orders in 1920 amounted to £385 4s. 2d., while claims had not been made for 120 pints from free orders and 115 pints for half-price orders. The number of orders for periods up to 28 days issued free of cost to the purchaser was 186, while the number of orders for milk at half-cost was 662. A supply of dried milk in powder form is also kept at the Centre. This is supplied only to mothers who are regular in attendance. Before purchasing the weight card of the infant must be produced, on the back of this is marked the quantity to be supplied, each purchase being entered and initialed by the seller. The dried milk is also issued free or at half-cost on the milk orders. The quantity of dried milk sold during the year was 528 lbs.

### **The Day Nursery.**

This is run by voluntary subscriptions, which are not adequate for its proper support. It has accommodation for 16 children. The resident staff include a Matron, Nurse and Probationer, a woman coming in daily to do the cleansing. Parents desiring to have a child admitted must complete an income form similar to that required for a milk order. These are examined by me and it is then decided whether the case is a suitable one for admission. The income limit basis was that on which the milk orders are issued. The charge for admission was 9d. per child per day; this was later raised to 1/-. On admission in the morning each child is undressed, bathed, and dressed in clothes belonging to the Nursery. Three meals per day of a suitable kind are given. I visit about twice per week and see all new admissions and also any other children requiring attention. No resident children are admitted. At the end of this year the serious shortage of funds compelled the Committee to consider the necessity of closing, but this was deferred for three months.

### **Boarded Out or Foster Children.**

The Local Authority responsible for these children is the

Board of Guardians. At the end of the year steps were being taken regarding the appointment of the Health Visitor and School Nurses as Infant Life Protection Officers for such children in the Borough.

### **Home Helps.**

No assistance of this nature was provided. There is a great difficulty in obtaining women of a suitable type for this purpose.

### **3. Puerperal Fever.**

Two cases were notified, both recovered.

**Ophthalmia Neonatorum**, see page 21.

**Measles**, see page 22.

**Acute Poliomyelitis**, see page 22.

### **Syphilis (Congenital).**

Three children were recorded as dying from this disease.

## SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

1. **Staff.** A complete list of this is given on page 1. The provision of a clerk has enabled me to devote much more of my time to purely medical duties.

### 2. **Hospital Accommodation.**

(a) **General.** The Taunton and Somerset Hospital. This has 107 beds, of which 15 are kept for children. It serves a considerable area between Minehead, Exeter, and Bridgwater. Simple maternity cases are not admitted.

The Union Infirmary. This Institution has 82 beds for the accommodation of the sick. Maternity cases are also admitted.

(b) **Infectious Diseases.** The Hospital for this purpose has 70 beds for infectious diseases and a separate portion with 20 beds for cases of Tuberculosis. It is controlled by a Joint Committee representing the Somerset County Council, the Taunton Rural District Council, and the Borough Council.

Smallpox. The Isolation Hospital will not admit cases of this disease; accommodation would have to be arranged through the County M.O.H.

A list of the cases removed to Hospital, and the diseases from which they were suffering will be found on page 23.

### 3. **The Acts (General Adoptive) in Force in this Area are as follows :**

	Date of Adoption.
Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890	November, 1890
Infectious Diseases (Prevention) Act, 1890	October, 1890
Public Libraries Act, 1892	October, 1902
Private Street Works Acts, 1892	June, 1906
Notification of Births Act, 1907	August, 1908
Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907	May, 1909

4. All material for Bacteriological or Chemical analysis from the Health Department is sent to the Somerset County Council, P.H. Laboratories, at Weston-super-Mare.

Private Practitioners in the area are also able to take advantage of this arrangement.

The number of specimens sent by the Health Department are as follows:

Material.	Number of Specimens.	Remarks.
Diphtheria swabs	411	31 were reported as shewing Diphtheria Bacilli.
Typhoid Fever, blood	39	10 were reported as positive.
Typhoid Fever, Faeces and Urine	6	No Typhoid Bacilli found.
Food Poisoning, Blood	17	None were reported as positive.
Food Poisoning, Food	4	No Gaertner Type Bacilli found.
Milk, effects of "Pasteurization"	2	
Water samples, Chemical	2	1 reported polluted.
,, ,, Bacteriological	14	3 reported unsatisfactory and 7 as showing marked evidence of contamination.
Gonorrhoea, smears from eyes	2	No Gonococci found.
Tuberculosis	nil.	

## HOUSING.

### I. General Housing Conditions in the district.

1. General housing conditions. Taunton is in no way different to almost every other area in this respect of the general shortage of houses. It is, however, peculiar in the number of courts without through passage and opening off main thoroughfares. In these courts there is generally a row of houses, almost invariably without any backlet, without any water supply in the house, and without separate closet accommodation.

The back of this row generally abuts on the passage of another court.

Many other houses not in courts lack any water supply and sink within the house.

#### (a) EXTENT OF SHORTAGE OF HOUSES:—

(i)	To meet the unsatisfied demand taking account of the growth of population	... ..	474
(ii)	Replace other houses which are unfit for human habitation and cannot be made fit	... ..	252
(iii)	Replace other houses, which although they cannot be at present regarded as unfit for human habitation, fall definitely below a reasonable standard		346
Total			1072

(b) MEASURES TAKEN OR CONTEMPLATED TO RELIEVE THE  
SHORTAGE :—

- (i) The erection of 500 dwelling houses is contemplated.
  - (ii) There are 75 under construction.
  - (iii) Three sites have been purchased at Leslie Avenue, Greenway Road and Wellington Road while negotiations for the purchase of a fourth at Holway are in progress. There will be accommodation for 301 houses on the three sites purchased, and accommodation for 70 on the Holway site if this is purchased.
- (3) No important changes in the population are anticipated in the near future.

## II. Overcrowding.

1. Extent. I have no complete information as to the extent of the overcrowding but my general knowledge of the district, the reports of the Sanitary Inspector, and Health Visitor all lead me to believe that it is widespread and serious.

2. Causes. The lack of any building during the war and the impossibility of building now and letting at a rent which will bring in a return commensurate with the outlay.

3. Measures taken or contemplated for dealing with overcrowding. These are the erection of new houses by the Corporation.

4. Principal cases of overcrowding during the year and action taken. Two cases were reported to the P.H. Committee and orders to abate were made. These were complied with.

## III. Fitness of Houses.

1. General standard of housing in the district.

The majority of the houses in the courts and poorer districts have no water supply within the house, no separate water closet and are without through ventilation. They have no damp course and no proper receptacles for holding household refuse, nor a ventilated store for keeping food.

As regards the larger houses, a proportion of these have basement kitchens.

2. General action taken as regards unfit houses under :

(a) Public Health Acts. Action is taken under these acts to remedy such defects as uncleanliness of the inner walls and ceilings, defective floors, stairs, and windows, etc. A full statement is found in the report of the Sanitary Inspector on page 44.

(b) Housing Acts, nil.

3. The difficulties in remedying unfitness.

There are no houses available in which the tenants from houses under reconstruction could be housed.

4. There is an adequate supply of town's water for all the new houses it is proposed to erect.

It is difficult in many cases to secure the provision of closets for the tenants in the courts ; as far as possible a standard of one W.C. to every ten persons is required.

Refuse Disposal. It appears to be impossible to compel the provision of sanitary metal receptacles for storing this prior to removal. Alterations to the Refuse Destructor are proposed which will increase its efficiency.

#### IV. Unhealthy Areas.

One area was represented to the Council as unhealthy on August 3rd, 1920.

This area lies between King Street on N.W., Tancred Street on S.W., Duke Street and Foundry Court on S.E., and St. Augustine Street on N.E.

Inspection of other areas is proceeding.

#### V. There are no Bye-laws for Houses let in lodgings, or for tents, vans and sheds.

The existing Building Bye-laws require revision and modernising.

## APPENDICES.

### HOUSING CONDITIONS.

Statistics. Year ended December 31st, 1920.

#### I. GENERAL.

1.	Estimated Population	...	...	...	24,031
2.	General Death Rate	...	...	...	12.4
3.	Death Rate from Tuberculosis	...	...	...	1.8
4.	Infantile Mortality	...	...	...	50.0
5.	Number of dwelling houses of all classes	...	...	...	5,107
6.	Number of working class dwelling houses	...	...	...	4,570
7.	Number of new working class houses erected	...	...	...	nil.

#### 2. UNFIT DWELLING HOUSES.

##### I. Inspection.

1.	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under P.H. or Housing Acts)	...	...	...	608
2.	Number of dwelling houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910	...	...	...	153
3.	Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	nil.
4.	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-headings) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	88

##### II. Remedy of Defects without Service of formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	...	...	...	...	422
---	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

##### III. Action under Statutory Powers.

###### A. Proceedings under Sec. 28, H.T.P. etc. Act, 1919.

1.	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...	...	...	nil.
2.	Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit				
	(a) by owners	...	...	...	nil.
	(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	...	...	...	nil.

3. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which closing orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close nil.
- B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts.
  1. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... .. 309
  2. Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied :
    - (a) by owners ... .. 455
    - (b) by Local Authority in default of owners nil.
- C. Proceedings under sections 17 and 18 of H.T.P. etc. Act, 1909.
  1. Number of representations made with a view to the making of closing orders ... .. nil.
  2. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which closing orders were made ... .. nil.
  3. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which closing orders were determined, the dwelling houses having been rendered fit ... .. nil.
  4. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which demolition orders were made ... .. nil.
  5. Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of demolition orders ... .. nil.

### 3. UNHEALTHY AREAS.

Areas represented to the Local Authority with a view to Improvement Schemes under (a) Part I. or (b) Part II. of the Act of 1890 :

1. Name of area, King Street and Duke Street
2. Acreage ... .. 1 acre, 72 poles
3. Number of working class houses in area ... 83
4. Number of working class persons to be displaced 265
5. Number of houses not complying with the building bye-laws erected with the consent of Local Authority under Sec. 25 of H.T.P. etc. 1919 nil.
5. Staff engaged in housing work with the duties of each officer. The Medical Officer of Health superintend and advise.

The Sanitary Inspector, who inspects, records and reports to the M.O.H. and Health Committee.

The Assistant Sanitary Inspector, assists Sanitary Inspector in his duties.

The Clerk, tabulates and summarizes the records. .

This list does not include the Staff of the Borough Surveyor's Department who are engaged in the lay-out of sites, the planning and supervision of the erection of the new dwellings in process of erection.

The first survey of the district as required by the Housing Acts section 17 (1) /09 is far from complete, the services of an additional inspector would be required to secure this. The present system is to inspect only the worst property under this Section.

METEOROLOGICAL TABLE, 1920.

MONTH.	Barometer.			Thermometer.			Sunshine.		Rainfall.	
	Mean.	Highest.	Lowest.	Mean.	Highest.	Lowest.	Hours.	Sunless Days.	Inches.	Days Rain fell
January	29.54	30.48	29.12	42.1°	58°	22°	48	14	4.08	24
February	30.18	30.55	29.73	43.5°	50°	33.5°	76.61	6	0.94	15
March	29.76	30.66	28.86	42.0°	54°	30°	88.5	10	2.95	19
April	29.50	30.19	29.00	48.5°	55°	42°	93	5	2.97	26
May	29.84	30.30	29.38	53.5°	64°	42.5°	205.5	4	2.18	20
June	30.00	30.35	29.66	50.5°	65°	47°	181	3	1.65	14
July	29.82	30.27	29.46	58.5°	63.5°	54°	139	5	4.19	26
August	30.01	30.45	29.50	57.0°	63°	51°	162	3	1.00	8
September	29.83	30.25	29.41	57.5°	67.5°	48°	110	4	1.33	10
October	29.74	30.27	29.23	52.0°	60°	39.5°	98	8	2.64	14
November	29.84	30.44	29.22	44.5°	55.5°	32.5°	61.5	12	1.28	12
December	29.89	30.40	29.34	38.7°	52.5°	25°	42	13	2.53	18

Total Rainfall for the year 27.74 inches.      Total Hours of Sunshine for the Year 1305.11 hours.

**ANNUAL REPORT of the MEDICAL OFFICER of HEALTH***For the year 1920.*

FOR THE BOROUGH OF TAUNTON,

*on the administration of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in connection with***Factories, Workshops, Laundries, Workplaces and Homework.****1.—INSPECTION.**

INCLUDING INSPECTIONS MADE BY SANITARY INSPECTORS OR INSPECTORS OF NUISANCES.

Premises (1)	Number of		
	Inspections (2)	Written Notices (3)	Prosecutions (4)
Factories	109	..	..
Workshops .. .. .	110	3	..
Workplaces .. .. .	113	2	..
Total .. .. .	332	5	..

**2.—DEFECTS FOUND.**

Particulars  (1)	Number of Defects			Number of Prosecutions (5)
	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	Referred to H.M. Inspector (4)	
NUISANCES UNDER PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS				
Want of Cleanliness .. .. .	6	6	..	..
SANITARY ACCOMMODATION :				
Insufficient .. .. .	1	1	..	..
Defective .. .. .	5	5	..	..
Not separate for sexes . . . . .	..	..	..	..
OFFENCES UNDER THE FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT				
Breach of Special Sanitary requirements of bakehouses (SS. 97 to 100) ..	6	6	..	..
Total .. .. .				
	18	18	..	..



**TAUNTON BOROUGH SANITARY DISTRICT.****Registered Workshops.**

Workshops on the Register (s. 131) at the end of the year (1)	Number. (2)
Bakehouses 23, Acetylene 1 .. ..	24
Dressmakers 22, Milliners 12, Tailors 11 .. ..	45
Boots and Shoes 6, Rags 4 .. ..	10
Brushes 1, Cabinet Maker and Upholsterers 8 .. ..	9
Plumbers and Painters 13, Saddlers 4 .. ..	17
Glove and Gaiters 2, Carpenters 15 .. ..	17
Carriage Smith 4, and Wheelwrights 12 .. ..	16
Scales 2, Tinman 3, Cycle 12 .. ..	17
Cooper 1, Dyer 1, Engraver 2 .. ..	4
Guns 1, Jeweller 6, Basket 2 .. ..	9
Laundry 1, Organ 1, Piano 1 .. ..	3
Picture 6, Sculptor 2, Wood Stapler 1 .. ..	9
Photographer 6 .. ..	6
Domestic Workshops .. ..	92
Workplaces .. ..	19
Total number of Workshops on Register* ..	297

\*186 Workshops, 92 Domestic Workshops and 19 Workplaces.

**OTHER MATTERS.**

Class (1)	Number (2)
<b>MATTERS NOTIFIED TO H.M. INSPECTOR OF FACTORIES :—</b>	
Failure to affix Abstract of the Factory and Workshop Acts (S. 133) .. ..	nil.
<b>ACTION TAKEN IN MATTERS REFERRED BY H.M. INSPECTOR AS REMEDIAL UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS, BUT NOT UNDER THE FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (S. 5, 901) :—</b>	
Notified by H.M. Inspector .. ..	10
Reports (of action taken) sent to H.M. Inspector .. ..	10
<b>OTHER :—</b>	
Underground Bakehouses (S. 101) .. ..	nil.
Certificates granted during the year .. ..	nil.
In use at the end of the year .. ..	nil.

## Taunton Borough Sanitary District.

**Sanitary Inspector's Report of the work completed in the year  
1920. James W. Northcombe, F.I.S.E., Certified Inspector.**

Number of informal notices given	...	...	...	276
Number of verbal notices given	...	...	...	360
Number of Statutory Notices served	...	...	...	33
Houses and premises cleaned and repaired	...	...	...	337
Defective roofs repaired	...	...	...	85
„ courtyards repaired	...	...	...	5
„ windows repaired	...	...	...	57
„ shutes repaired	...	...	...	30
„ floors made good	...	...	...	54
„ waste trough made good	...	...	...	8
„ cesspit	...	...	...	2
New waste trough fixed	...	...	...	6
House drains, soil pipe repaired	...	...	...	1
drains relaid, cleansed, etc.	...	...	...	77
Water Closets, new provided	...	...	...	1
repaired and unchoked	...	...	...	162
Water Supply, wells filled up	...	...	...	7
main tap fixed	...	...	...	1
Overcrowding abated	...	...	...	2

Animals removed, improperly kept (instances 61)	...	...	205
Removal of dung, animal and other refuse	...	...	52
Dust removed, communications received and attended to	...	...	151

### Miscellaneous, regularly inspected:

Bakehouses	...	...	...	23
Cowsheds	...	...	...	7
Dairies, milk shops, etc.	...	...	...	41
Slaughterhouses registered	...	...	7	
„ licensed	...	...	2	
			—	9
Lodging Houses	...	...	...	2

### Offensive Trades:

Gut scraping premises	...	...	...	1
Tripe boiling premises	...	...	...	8
Tannery	...	...	...	1

### Disinfecting for the Year 1920.

Houses disinfected after infectious illness, etc.		...	...	229
Tuberculosis	95	Shelters (Tuberculosis)		17
Measles	6	Meningitis		3
Scarlet Fever	14	Nephritis		1
Typhoid and Enteric	8	Dropsy		1
Diphtheria	37	Chicken Pox		1
Puerperal	2	Septic Poisoning		1
Verminous	8	Venereal		1
Pneumonia	4	Enteritis		1
Cancer	7	Typhus Contact		3
Military	7			
Scabies	9		Total	229
Stables	3			

### Number of Articles disinfected at the Steam Disinfector.

Military	3063	Nephritis	22
Tuberculosis	375	Venereal	8
Scarlet Fever	121	Enteritis	22
Typhoid	88	Typhus (contact)	103
Diphtheria	721	Malaria	47
Verminous	368		
Cancer	15	Total	5267
Scabies	286		
Meningitis	28		

The van used for removing bedding, etc., has been disinfected on 106 occasions and 14 books have been fumigated.

### Visits & Inspections of the Sanitary Inspector for the year 1920.

Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	...	184
Hide and Skin Depot	...	...	...	...	61
Cattle Market	...	...	...	...	102
Cattle Pens	...	...	...	...	8
Gut Scraping	...	...	...	...	29
Food Shops	...	...	...	...	76
Dairies	...	...	...	...	217
Cowsheds	...	...	...	...	90
Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	43

Factories 96, Garages 13	...	...	...	...	109
Workshops	...	...	...	...	110
Rag Sorting	...	...	...	...	23
Lodging Houses	...	...	..	...	36
Manure Pits	...	...	...	...	90
Schools (Elementary)	...	...	...	...	32
Cesspits	...	...	...	...	17
Tanyards	...	...	...	..	9
Gas Works	...	...	...	...	8
Parade	...	...	...	...	50
General	...	...	...	...	2134
West Somerset Dairy	...	...	...	...	117
					<hr/> 3545 <hr/>

### Fruit and Meat destroyed at the Destructor during the year 1920.

					tons. cwts. qrs. lbs.		
Offals	...	...	...		12	2	7
Beef	...	...	...		5	0	5
Beef Frozen	...	...	...		4	0	13
Beef Corned	...	...	...		1	3	20
Calves	...	...	...		2	0	6
Pigs	...	...	...		4	1	14
Hams	...	...	...		2	2	0
Bacon	...	...	...		0	0	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Mutton	...	...	...		2	3	2
Potted Meat	...	...	...		0	0	8
Fish	...	...	...		0	1	12 $\frac{1}{2}$
Total					<hr/> 1	<hr/> 15	<hr/> 3
					<hr/> 19 <hr/>		
Cheese	...	...	...	...		1	6
Butter	...	...	...	...			5 $\frac{3}{4}$
Pineapples		...	...	...		5	tins
Tomatoes	...	...	...	...		53	„
Pears	...	...	...	...		2	„
Condensed Milk		...	...	...		39	„



